UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

8 May 19 86

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Becky Gordon

ENTITLED Secluded Women, Excluded Men: Sexual Segregation in Urban Morocco

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology

Instructor in Charge

APPROVED:

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Anthropology

O-1364

SECLUDED WOMEN, EXCLUDED MEN:
SEXUAL SEGREGATION IN URBAN MOROCCO

BY

BECKY GORDON

THESIS

for the

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

IN

ANTHROPOLOGY

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

University of Illinois

Urbana, Illinois

1986

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to express my appreciation for the many hours of help I received from Steve Friedland in the printing of this thesis, and from Evie Ellis in proofreading the final draft. Much thanks also goes to Professor Alma Gottlieb and Professor Janet Dougherty for reading the thesis.

I am most grateful to Professor Gottlieb for advising me in the researching and writing of this paper. My discussions with her, in our own meetings as well as in her anthropology course on women, have given me a better understanding not only of the problems and challenges of the study of gender, but more importantly, of the goals and values to which social anthropolgy is dedicated.

Students and scholars of the social sciences have only recently begun to consider women as responsive actors and directors within the human social world. In the Western intellectual mind of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, men alone were perceived as culturally alive beings. They were the exclusive subjects as well as the interpreters of social scientific investigations. It is no wonder, then, that the beginnings of anthropological inquiry were also marked by the complacent assumption that women cross-culturally were an inferior sub-population. Male anthropologists clearly dominated the field. Ethnographic data, therefore, were based solely upon male roles and perceptions. Methodology and analytical frameworks disregarded women as important members of society. In short, women constituted a "muted group" (Ardener 1975:xiii):

> If the models of a society made by most ethnographers tend to be models derived from the male portion of that society, how does the symbolic weight of that other mass of persons - half or more of a normal population, as we have accepted - express itself? (Ardener 1972:138)

This kind of questioning, commensurate with the steadily growing voice of the Women's Movement, challenged anthropologists in the 1960's and 70's to radically alter traditional approaches and assumptions. New cross-cultural studies were conducted emphasizing such issues as female economic contribution, social

stratafication, and power distribution. Though contemporary models and theories have overturned old stereotypes, images, and myths about women, very few are free from embedded strains of prejudice and hidden political agendas, however unintentional they may be. Moreover, anthropologists, male or female, feminist or anti-feminist, are still struggling with an even more deep-seated handicap, namely, Western cultural biases.

The most striking example is the claim that male dominance is a fundamental, universal truth. Woman, Culture and Society, edited by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, provides a series of case studies, many of which stem directly from such a categorical proposition. "All contemporary societies are to some extent male-dominated," Rosaldo posits in her introduction, "and although the degree and expression of female subordination vary greatly, sexual asymmetry is presently a universal fact of human social life" (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974:3). The underlying set of reasons is what makes this 'fact' so problematic. There is, first and foremost, the common-place notion that across societies women's reproductive and maternal functions constitute the primary obstruction to their possession of power and status:

> Women have been seen as wives, and more particularly as mothers; that their activities have been limited by the responsibilities of childcare; that their lives have been defined in terms of reproductive functions; and that their personalities have been shaped by their ties with 'mothers' who in turn are also women- all of these are human products that we feel account for women's secondary status (Ibid.:14).

Such an argument presumes that the physical process of

menstruation or pregnancy is given similar social and symbolic meaning throughout the world. Our understanding in the West of feminine biological constraints cannot, however, be applied to all cultures and societies. Lois Paul proves this with her illuminating study of Guatemalan village women who proudly and defiantly shield the mystique of feminine sexuality from men. They lead a vibrant work life which is unimpaired by maternal functions, and of which their products are highly prestigious (1974). Rosaldo's negative bias toward female biology and sexuality is further countered by the case of the Hua of New Guinea, a society in which men themselves privately revere and, in fact, imitate female menstruation and pregnancy (Meigs 1976).

Rosaldo's claim implies yet another concept also defined as a nature given by her and her colleagues. That all societies not only equate women with nature and men with culture, but that nature is the universal underside of culture is the controversial model put forth by Sherry Ortner (1974). Women, bound within this lower world of childbirth and childrearing, are thus destined by society to remain beneath and apart from the higher, political, cultural world of their male counterparts. Do all peoples necessarily value the spheres of nature and culture in the same way? Moreover, do all cosmological schemes treat the world as a binary phenomenon in which nature and culture are opposing environments? Ortner has dismissed cross-cultural evidence that contradicts her argument and sharpens the presence of her ethnocentric tendencies. One such example comes from

Ivory Coast. The Beng divide their world into the forest/fields and the village, both which are controlled by the Earth Spirit (embodied in the forest). Moreover, agricultural work is metaphorically linked to the processes of menstruation and pregnancy because the yielding of crops is seen as a related domain of human fertility (Gottlieb 1982).

As these presuppositions are treated and used as fundamental paradigms, anthropological analyses of female power and prestige are fraught with basic definitional problems. The public/political--private/domestic construct has been used by female anthropologists to explain women's general lack of political and economic control in society:

> Women, confined to the domestic sphere, do not have access to the sorts of authority, prestige and cultural value that are the prerogatives of men...the avenues by which women gain prestige and a sense of value are shaped and often limited by their association with the domestic world (Rosaldo 1974:7).

Such a perspective indicates the way in which Rosaldo and others have set aside the private domain as a household of family and children which straps the woman in, denying her any opportunity to enter public life. Domesticity stands between women and all means of power and influence. It is therefore a sphere which in itself is of no consequence, and is universally devalued in relation to the public sphere.

Consonant with this line of reasoning, sexually segregated societies are often marked as the most oppressive toward women (Rogers 1978:144). However, a number of studies conducted in cultures of the Mediterranean, a region characterized by extreme

sexual division, provide contrasting patterns to those set down by Rosaldo, Lamphere, Chodorow and others. In her discussion of Middle Eastern women, Cynthia Nelson explains that women are able to approach public affairs, "but they do so from private positions. In public, women are separated from men and men mix widely in the public circle of the market. The women, on the other hand, mix in a large number of smaller groups, more exclusive than the society of men and consisting largely of closer and more distant kin, affines and other women who are friends of the women of the family" (1974:557). Susan Carol Rogers observed that while French peasant men are attributed public prestige, it is the women who, within their private sphere, control economic resources and manipulate alliances between kin groups (1975). In her work among village peasants of Greece, Ernestine Friedl found that, "If a careful analysis of the life of a community shows that the family is the most significant social unit, then the private, and not the public sector, is the sphere in which the relative attribution of power to males and females is of the greatest real importance" (1967:97).

Such conclusions constitute a striking challenge to the universal image of a narrow, enslaving, politically dormant domestic world. Nelson claims that, to the contrary, it can be both expansive as well as complex in its social organization. Rogers reveals the political, even public edge of domesticity that has hitherto been overlooked. Friedl gives evidence of a

highly valued private realm, thus positing that power and status have often been measured from a misleading frame of reference. Common to each of these findings is the recognition that public and private are both spheres of importance, each containing formal and informal, explicit and implicit, overt and covert mechanisms of power which are exploited by both males and females. Accepting such a far more unruly and complicated cultural design, the practice of sexual segregation and seclusion demands further, more rigorous cross-cultural investigation. Friedl points out that, "differential right of access to space is a common cultural form for expressing superiority and inferiority in social position" (1967:9). Every society establishes rules through which to create and perpetuate a public ideology, but the hidden intricate operations of power and control of resources connot be dismissed. They function within and are valued by society in their own right, and therefore require equal analysis by the anthropologist.

Urban Morocco is a fascinating case in point. Despite the changes in the attitudes and conduct of men and women and the permeability of spatial barriers, the institution of purdah, the seclusion of women, has remained largely intact. In this paper I will be focusing on men and women of the urban middle classes. Segregation is less stringent among the lower working class as women are often required to work outside the home perhaps in the company of men, and as unemployed men may play a more active role within the household (Maher 1974).

Moroccan society is a map outlined by female and male zones. The streets, the stores and cafes, the market, and above all, the shrines and mosques are the places and spaces of men. The home, its courtyard and rooftop, is the abode of women. Other social activities in which women engage are going to the public bath, and holding private family and religious celebrations. When both sexes attend ritual and social gatherings, the home is not territorially dominated by one or the other, but is bisectioned so that males and females may congregate among their own.

Economics and politics are also sexually differentiated. A woman's work is household work. Part-time work beyond the home - curing, midwifery, or wool-spinning (Dwyer 1978a:17) - is domestic-oriented as well. A man's work - artisanry, trading or selling - is linked to the market economy. In economics, as in all walks of life, men are men's clients and women are women's clients. All political and legal offices are filled by men with the exception of the arifa, the 'woman who knows,' who seeks to protects women's legal rights. Women are forbidden to enter a courtroom unless they are involved in a case that is being heard. Judges generally prefer male witnesses (Ibid.:19).

Such is the setting in Morocco. Viewed solely from the public standpoint, the practice of segregation seems to work towards the benefit of men and the impediment of women. I aim to examine Moroccan purdah as a system that carries a body of implicit and explicit meanings. The veiled, secluded woman exhibits what most Moroccan men deem cultural and religious truth: women are handicapped with deficient rationality and

excessive sexuality, and must therefore be guarded and controlled by men. At the same time women reflect that which men never acknowledge: men's reason often fails to command the sexual urges that are induced by the sight of a woman. In short, I will demonstrate that on a conceptual level women, by donning the veil, bear responsibility for the weakness of men and, hence, for the protection and honor of themselves.

On the actual ground of Moroccan sexual dynamics of daily life, I will suggest that purdah creates two distinct realms - the public and private - within which male and female extend influence and exert power over their own and the opposite sex. Situated action is a notion that lies at the base of a rather new anthropological approach to relationships of power (Rosen 1978, 1984; Geertz 1979; Eickelman 1976; Nelson 1974). Nelson explains the model as follows:

> One actor controls the other with respect to particular situations and spheres of conduct -or scopes-while the other actor is regularly dominant in other areas of situated conduct (1974:553).

Rosen offers a variation on this theme, suggesting that people negotiate relationships, and that in this process dominance or subordination will be accorded to those involved depending on their relative positions within that given context (1984). In other words, interchange of influence is the operating mechanism in all relations of power. Interacting persons will negotiate and set down the rules of their particular encounter be it in the political, economic, religious, or sexual domain of life. Such an

approach does not rank the power and prestige of the female world in relation to that of the male. Rather, it brings to bear the strategies of manipulation available to women which, in their respective sphere, are both effective and highly valued. What allows for the independent functioning of this world is the institution of female seclusion. I submit that insofar as women lay claim to domestic space and men to public, the latter shall remain excluded from the former without being able to disturb or manipulate their world in any significant way. I hope, therefore, to illustrate the double edge of Moroccan purdah; while it explicitly perpetuates the public myth of male dominance, it also ensures the autonomy and power of women's private world. A developmental perspective will uncover the lengthening of distance between men and women as they move through life. Woman, from birth until death, remains a part of domestic space; man seeks to escape domesticity and seclude himself in the public world so that he can more easily and properly fulfill the role that is expected of him. The shift in the value and meaning of power is concurrent with the spaces and positions men and women occupy over the course of their lives.

The format of this paper is as follows: I shall begin by differentiating what I perceive to be the three main exegetical components of Moroccan sexual ideology - Quranic doctrine, folkloric images and notions, and the explanations given by Moroccans themselves. I will then spin out the life cycle of Moroccan males and females, locating the differences and similarities in sexual socialization processes first, and then

devoting the bulk of the discussion to adulthood wherein sexual fission and antagonism become most acute. The paper's conclusion falls into two parts. I will first address the implications for Moroccan society: What are the symbolic meanings of Moroccan sexual segregation? Is this practice directly sexist, and if so, how and against whom? What is the relationship between the Muslim institution of purdah and the Moroccan conception of social life and identity? I will close by making some general remarks concerning anthropological inquiry into the issues of gender, power and society.

***

I. PUBLIC IDEOLOGY

I begin the discussion with the assumption that culture is a two-fold phenomenon - it bears a public image which is consciously and sub-consciously upheld by members of society, and it holds a hidden dynamic that is not readily recognizable nor even explainable by the observer or the native. Before we unveil the private structures and systems of Moroccan society, it is important to look at the public sexual ideology itself, and the three main elements of which it is made. Islamic doctrine as expressed in the Quran provides certain clues as to where Moroccan perceptions of sexuality come from.

Islam markedly contraposes Christianity in its treatment of sexuality within the human and symbolic universe. The difference, as postulated by Abdelwahab Boudhiba in his work Sexuality in Islam, is that Islam seeks to integrate and compartmentalize sexuality into life rather than to submerge it. The acts of love and procreation are themselves symbols of, indeed reenactments of Allah's own creation. The state of being "is formed out of dust, ejaculation, abject water. But this emergence into existence is the very sign of human greatness and of divine majesty" (Boudhiba 1985:8). Such an idea contradicts Ortner's nature/culture paradigm which is itself rooted firmly in Christianity. For example, in the Christian tradition, instinct is a notion associated with flesh, evil, and nature, of which the symbolic

opposites are spirit, goodness, and culture. Islam, however, defines instinct as energy in its pure, neutral condition (Mernissi 1975:1). Such energy can be good or bad, helpful or harmful, productive or destructive depending on its use in the social world. Sex and sexuality, therefore, are not relegated a priori to the lower realm of 'nature' nor overpowered by a purer life of spirit and religion. They are not, contrary to popular Western understanding, suppressed by Islam:

> When Muhammed forbids or censures human activities, he does not want them to be neglected altogether, nor the powers from which they result to remain unused. He wants those powers to be employed as much as possible for the right aims (Ibid.:1).

Thus, to say that Islam seeks to integrate the sexual, without reducing it, means that it accepts the sexual with all of the tensions and potential conflicts that are necessarily a part of it.

What, then, is the traditional Islamic view of woman? Woman is conceived of as an active sexual being. According to Moroccan anthropologist Fatima Mernissi, this notably contrasts with the Christian conception of female. Whereas the Christian woman is sexually passive and internalizes her aggression, the Muslim woman is sexually active and thus turns her aggression outward (Ibid.:5). Common to both views is the belief that woman, active or passive, is a potential source of danger to society. She has the power to deceive and manipulate which must therefore be contained and neutralized. It is at this point where Islamic doctrine makes a connection between female sexuality and the

institution of purdah:

> And say to the believing women, that they cast down their eyes and guard their private parts and reveal not their adornment save such as is outward; and let them cast their veils over their bosoms... (Bouhdiba 1985:36)

This is the often-quoted passage in the Quran that essentially commands a Muslim woman to cover herself, and to remain sheltered in anonymity in the presence of public society. But what is it that she is sheltered from?

> The man who looks with concupiscence at the attractions of a woman who is not his will have lead poured into his eyes on the Day of Judgement (Ibid.:38).

The warning of the Prophet seems to imply that women, by their very beauty and active sexual nature, are indeed objects of fitna, of confusion, chaos and disorder.[1] They may tempt a man to engage in illicit sex which would violate divine precepts of the appropriate use and conduct of sexual behavior. Who, then, is being shielded from whom? Does threat arise from the inner perilous powers of women, or from the weaknesses of men? The Quran falls short of identifying either as the root cause of societal disruption; it seems to introduce the veil as a harness around both. Bouhdiba's thesis is that the Quran speaks of the unity and complementarity of the sexes. Mernissi's study of Moroccan men and women begins with the premise that "Islam affirms the potential equality of the sexes," but that the historical evolution of Arabo-Muslim laws and institutions has resulted in sexual inequality (Mernissi 1975:xv). Hence, it is Muslim culture that in its development has embellished the

fiction of women as the sole bearers of sexual unsanctity and of men, as the controllers of this negative force in society.

A second major component of the public sexual ideology is the images of male and female contained in Moroccan folktales, myths and proverbs. What is revealed in them is the temporality of the Muslim view of the sexes. The Moroccan lore expresses an ideology of becoming rather than of being. The characters "gain or lose ground with regard to the exhibition of basic Moroccan virtues that remain ideals for Moroccan men and women" (Dwyer 1978b:52). In her book Images and Self-images, Daisy Hilse Dwyer gives particular attention to the folk images of man and woman. She points out that women are most often portrayed in a negative light primarily because their perceived course of development is one of cultural and moral degeneration. It is said that at birth "women have a hundred angels and men have a hundred devils. Each year, however, one angel moves from the female to the male and one devil moves from the male to the female" until male purity and female impurity reach their ultimate actualization (Ibid.:60). The folkloric male and female must be examined in relation to one another, though their separate paths of development and maturation will become quite clear.

Female adolescence is the golden age of virgin purity and wisdom; for the young male it is a period of irresponsibility and foolishness. The Moroccan version of Hansel and Gretel reflects male and female traits which are opposite from those reflected in the Western story. The Moroccan Gretel is the one who drops date

pits on the ground as she and her brother are led off to the forest by their wicked father. When the children come upon a house in which there lives an old blind woman, the girl surmises, "I will go up to the old woman and will milk her sheep as she milks them. But I will always stand on her blind side. That way she will not take note of me, nor see that I'm milking" (Ibid.:70). After some time, her brother begs to go along on the milking. Despite the girl's warning to keep silent, the boy laughs aloud at the sight of the old woman and both children are captured and locked into jars to be fattened up for eating. In the end, it is the sister who pushes the witch into the oven killing her. The tale clearly juxtaposes the virgin girl whose image is pure, wise, even cunning, with her male counterpart whose frivolity leads them to disaster.

In another tale called The Quince, a poor widowed man gathers a basket of quinces as a gift to the Sultan. His daughter advises him not to take them for they would pass through the hands of the Sultan's women before they reached the Sultan himself. Instead, her father takes a basket of figs that she herself prepared. On seeing the man's offer, the Sultan angrily responds, "Others bring me silver and gold, and you bring only figs." After the Sultan ties him up as punishment, he becomes curious as to his odd mutterings and demands explanation:

> So the farmer explained how he had first packed the quinces, but how the daughter had said not to take them because the women of the household would take the first taste...Seeing the wisdom of the girl, the Sultan took her as wife, although he had never seen her. Her father became the father-

> in-law of the Sultan and so obtained considerable wealth (Ibid.:68).

Here the young female image is qualified in a subtle way. The daughter's perception is shaped by her nurturant instincts. Her wisdom is sheltered and thus naive. It is only by chance or crisis, as both tales show, that the Moroccan virgin girl is able to display and make use of her creativity and resourcefulness.

The folk image of woman as mother, though it carries seemingly ambiguous and perhaps conflicting behavioral traits, undergoes steady deterioration. First of all, her portrayal is not completely negative. The proverb, "Ask the experienced one, don't ask the doctor" refers to the wisdom and general know-how of female adults (Westermarck 1931:67). In an old Moroccan story entitled The Vengeance of Fatima, the narrator says the following about the power and passion of the wife:

> When a quarrel breaks out, it is not always the husband who gets the upper hand. Does he make a comment? The wife flies into a passion. Does he refuse to answer? She takes that for a reason to heap abuse on him. Finally there is one thing left to do - to take up his djellaba, his cane, and walk off... (Morris 1970:69).

The Charm, a short story translated by Elizabeth Fernea, focuses on a woman who searches out help in preventing her husband from taking a second wife. Her friend Khadooj tells her of Um Zeki, a woman who "can do anything. She's known for stopping weddings at the last minute, for bringing husbands and wives back together after they've fought for years. She's even managed to separate the closest and most loving of couples" (Fernea 1984:49). As a result of Um Zeki's help, the woman prevents a second marriage

regaining her husband's loyalty and love. This power attributed to women in folklore has an ambivalent quality about it. It may be implemented for disruptive or virtuous aims, which are contingent on the interests of the woman herself. Again, we come upon the Islamic notion of woman as an element of potential danger.

The more popular image of women is indicated by these Moroccan proverbs:

> If men swear to do you harm spend your night sleeping, if women swear to do you harm spend your night awake (Westermarck 1931:67).
>
> When a woman becomes old, nothing remains in her but poison and the color of sulphur (Ibid. :67).
>
> What the devil does in a year an old woman does in an hour (Ibid.:68).
>
> May God save you from the dew [which is considered injurious to the health] and from a woman with a yellow face (Ibid.:73).

Of the thirty-one tales of maternity Dwyer read, twenty-two were negative, seven were positive, and two were neutral (Dwyer 1978b:116). More often than not an adult woman is depicted as an enemy to be greatly feared, as a treacherous being who indulges in malicious schemes and evil intrigues. One of the more outstanding themes is the diversion of woman from her maternal functions by her innate selfishness and greed. In one tale, a woman finds a cache of silver coins inside a tomb, and thus abandons her baby so she can use its blanket to carry the money home with her. Upon her return, she finds that the walls of the tomb have mysteriously converged leaving her baby immortalized in

its stone (Ibid.:116).

Maternal wickedness is best represented in the folk image of mother-in-law. In another short story, Halime's First Marriage, Halime speaks of her mother-in-law:

> Oh misery! - she scarcely fed me, she pinched me, she threw pepper in my eyes, turned boiling water over on my feet-and then cursed me for my clumsiness (Morris 1970:160).

The mother-in-law then gave her pomegranate peel and said:

> 'Eat this, it will make thy teeth pretty.' As I chewed what I supposed to be pomegranate peel, I felt my lips, my tongue, and my gums burn...a few days later my teeth came loose and dropped out one after the other...I became as lean and long as a stick, my cheeks hung like empty pouches. I had no strength left. So - my husband divorced me. Oh he loved me, but he was afraid of his mother (Ibid.:163).

In the first tale, we see the mother forego her parental responsibility for the possession of wealth. In the second, want of her son's loyalty, and perhaps his economic resources, motivates the mother to substitute her role as friend and teacher to daughter-in-law for that of a virtual witch.

At the base of this image of turpitude is the notion that in her elder years, woman's sexuality is dangerously recharged. As her beauty withers away, she is relentlessly driven toward sexual desire. Such a woman must be especially avoided by men as indicated by a proverb which reads, "Sexual intercourse with an old woman gives one lice and long hair on the head" (Westermarck 1931:73). The menopausal woman, and the widow in particalar, are the most impure females of all. Saint of the Mat is a tale in which there is an old man, his sister, his wife, and his mother.

When they are told of a saint in the forest who will grant their wishes, the sister asks for the family's shepherd as a spouse, the mother requests a man to share in the wealth that she has hidden away, and the wife pleads to the saint, "Strike down my husband with blindness so that I can bring my lover." The sister is granted her wish, the mother is eaten by a lion which she mistakes for her new husband, and the wife is forced from the house and sent a letter of divorce (Dwyer 1978b:122).

The image of the Moroccan male adult represents the inverse of the female, though not absolutely. While he is seen to be culturally progressing, he is still subject to ill reason and irresponsible action. There is one story of a man who, jealous when his pregnant wife received liver from a butcher, forced her to eat an entire slaughtered sheep. As she pleaded with him, he took a knife and split open his wife's stomach only to find his child with a piece of liver in its mouth. The woman had vanished, leaving in her place "a pair of silver scissors, the ones that the angels had used to cut her garments for the afterlife. They had left them behind as a sign that she had been taken to heaven, for she had done no earthly wrong" (Ibid.:121).

Only in old age is a man morally enhanced in a significant way. The folk image of man shows him turning away from domestic affairs and passing into the realm of Allah. This theme is illustrated by a folktale in which a man has who has murdered ninety-nine souls, is inspired by a saint to leave his home in search of God. In the course of his wanderings, he comes upon a

thief and another killer who request that he inquire as to where their home in hell will be. When he finally meets a saint, he confesses his and the others' crimes and asks about their p'ace in hell. The saint answers that all are forgiven and all will reside in heaven (Ibid.:104).

Perhaps the most vivid expression of opposing male and female developmental directions is the classic tale of the pilgrim and his adulterous wife. Though he requests that she stay in seclusion until he returns from his religious duties, the wife cleverly disguises herself and comes upon one whom she desires. The pilgrim is grief-stricken when he comes home to find his wife gone. His brothers discover her whereabouts and shoot her dead; her lover is imprisoned and the pilgrim takes another wife (Ibid.:129). In other words, while men are cultivating their religious lives, women are floundering in devious sexual pursuits.

The images of man and woman read clearly. Her moral decline is uninterrupted; his moral escalade may linger or may even cease, but it will not retreat. The concept of relative morality is in full operation. Maleness and femaleness begin and evolve separately and differently, and yet, they are inexorably interwoven. Their interaction poses a constant threat and perpetuates continual conflict.

At this point it must be asked, what do these tales and proverbs mean? What are they telling Moroccan society? Some anthropologists have begun to question the notion of myth and folklore as merely a "charter" which corresponds to the

behavioral patterns of society, and have suggested that there exists a more dynamic, mutually stimulating relationship between the two realms (Gottlieb 1986). Of the small portion of Moroccan lore I have examined, I would say that it functions somewhat the same for men and women. For women, the tales are not merely an expression of how they act, or should act. They instead suggest, in an extreme form, particular human complexes and flaws that could very well plague women in their development, states and conditions that might possibly consume them at later stages in their lives. By no means do men carry a completely positive image in folklore. Men are similarly being warned of the social mistakes they can commit which will impair their moral and religious growth. Of course, they are not portrayed negatively as often as are women and this may reflect the general public tendency to deny the faults and deficiencies of men. In any case, rather than standing as a charter for society, I believe that Moroccan tales provide a set of attitudes and behaviors that are contrary to what is considered virtuous, moral and good. They relay messages of warning that will perhaps counter deviance in female and male social development.

Men and women in a given society often have different perceptions and give contrasting valuations to themselves and to each other. For example, Phyllis Kaberry noted the incongruence between male and female outlooks on sexuality among the Nsaw of Cameroon. She quoted women as saying, "Important things are women. Men are little. The things of women are important. What

are the things of men? Men are indeed worthless. Women are indeed God" (Kaberry 1952:150). On the other hand, men said, "Yes a woman is like God, and like God she cannot speak. She must sit silently. It is good that she should only accept" (Ibid.:152). What do Moroccan men and women have to say about their own and the opposite sex? Are the cultural constructs of each different, and if so, then to what extent? Interesting data are provided by Dwyer and Lawrence Rosen on the sexual views or ideologies held by women and men in the cities of Taroudannt and Sefrou. We must first consider the Moroccan perspective on the characteristics of human nature. According to one of Rosen's informants, humans are triadically composed: Ruh refers to one's spirit. In religious text, it is equated with rih which means "the creation of which belongs to Allah" (Calverley 1943:255). Nefs is the instinctual impulses that can lead one astray. Like the Hebrew word nefesh it expresses the idea of physical appetite (Ibid.:254). Aqel means reason and rationality with which one controls his/her nefs (Rosen 1984:31).

In reference to sexuality, men perceive women to be uncontrollable and insatiable in their lust. Tuhami, a tilemaker from Meknes say that, "All women in the world have only one thought: to make love to a man" (Crapanzano 1980:110). Men see themselves, however, as possessing more aqel and therefore more self-command. The female understanding is slightly but significantly different in that she sees men equally vulnerable to their inner passions. The women of Taroudannt say that, "A

man is like the hands of a clock, he points in all directions. He is like the oued [river], he cuts his bed in one place one year and in another the next" (Dwyer 1978a:230). It is only among their own sex that women will downgrade the behavior of men. It is only in privacy that they will say "Men's minds are in their penises," and further concede that "Women's minds are in their vulvas" (Ibid.:231). Women further assert they are as capable as men in restraining and channeling their drives in a proper way (Dwyer 1978b:150). The point of disagreement, then, is not the carnal desire itself, but the capacity of reason necessary to confront the desire.

The perspectives on male and female adulthood conflict as well. Men by and large see sexual quests and petty self-centered intrigues as distracting women from their prescribed maternal roles. Men act out their role without any such dilemma. Women, on the other hand, do claim that men are plagued with the same tendencies. They furthermore recognize the tendency within themselves, emphasizing that they can and do cope with it in a responsible adult manner, perhaps even more so than do men (Ibid.:151).

Why are women veiled? Male exegesis rests on the assumption that women are naturally inferior to men, as indicated by Si Abdallah, a male Sefroui informant to Rosen:

> Women too have aqel [reason] but in their case it can't develop as much as in men. Its just in their nature. Women have very great sexual desires and thats why a man is always necessary to control them, to keep them from creating all sorts of disorder, to keep them from leading men

> astray. That is why women must be cloaked when in public. Its like the saying goes: 'A woman by herself is like a Turkish bath without water' because she is always hot and without a man she has no way to slake the fire (1978:567).

Women suggest a different reasoning for the practice of purdah. Again, they concede that their need for restraint is well-founded. They also agree that it is only proper for men to share a social life with men. Of critical importance, however, is women's claim that seclusion affords them independence from men. Although women adhere to the cultural rule that men and women must interact with those of their own sex, they use the male belief in female inferiority to defy men, and to protect against their impingement on women's life space (Ibid.:157). "No matter how demanding the man is," say Moroccan women, "the woman must stand firm against him or, by submitting, must ultimately pay the social price" (Dwyer 1978a:231). Women, patient with the frailties of men, are far more exigent of themselves, and use seclusion as a means of guarding one another and maintaining proper female demeanor.

In essence, male and female images of themselves and each other are rather similar, the female being a modified version of the male. Men see women crippled by selfish lust and greed; they themselves are free of this handicap. Women see men as unreliable, untrustworthy, and hence incapable of ever fulfilling their ideal cultural roles; in themselves they are aware of the flaws sighted by men, but trust their ability to correct them.

This completes the multi-plex composition of Moroccan sexual

ideology. Islam, by virtue of its integrationist thrust, proclaims the need for the regulation of sexual activity, lest it assume command over the whole of social life. The Quran recognizes a female deep-seated power which may at once wreak havoc on society, and it conveys male victimization to weakness and temptation which may violate societal order as well. Moroccan folklore places male and female in their developmental contexts. It offers scenarios of men and women as they journey through life phases and experiences, their paths running contradictory to each other, their interaction always reshaped by changing circumstances. The perceptions and exegeses correspond to and conflict with both religious and folk ideologies. All three levels of thought and belief clearly enforce and sanctify sexual segregation. Public myth has a power that is compelling and persuasive. But in Morocco, as in all societies, myth coexists with reality. And though the sexual fiction has its purpose and meaning, Morocco must also be understood in terms of its private sexual reality.

Birth, in the Moroccan world view, is a culture-bearing as much as a nature-bearing phenomenon. The woman and the fetus are of one entity, the needs of one being the needs of the other. The shared life of a mother and her not-quite-human infant is deemed positive and healthy by society. It is during the pre and post-natal period that a woman is attributed high status, so much so that pregnancy is often defined as the second phase of virginity (Dwyer 1978b). This situation is not necessarily characteristic of all Muslim societies. In Turkish villages, a source of woman's shame, "is related to the view that she does not contain the power of creation in her. Her fertility is basically a kind of indiscriminate fecundity which is redeemed only by being 'enclosed' and 'covered' by men" (Delaney forthcoming). It does not seem that the biological functions of sexuality directly play upon Moroccan conceptions of purdah, or of the perceived deficiencies of women. The ability to be fertile belongs solely to women, and the power and status thereof (to be discussed later) is claimed by women only.

The adjective 'not-quite-human' aptly describes the Moroccan conception of children. Si Abdallah characterizes children thus:

> When children are born they are all nefs and only a little bit 'aqel. Their minds are totally blank and their senses work like a camera taking a picture of this, an impression of that (Rosen 1978:567).

The absence of rational faculties, of which this Moroccan speaks, is a trait common to all children. However, the immediate activation of the sexual dimension of nefs is attributed exclusively to boys. Moroccans say it is possible to ascertain the sex of a child in its fetal stage (Dwyer 1978b:92). A male fetus is said to twist and turn in an almost uncontrollable manner. A female fetus remains still and quiet at the base of the womb. These perceived movement patterns underline the active, boisterous sexuality of the former and the inert sexuality of the latter. It is precisely this difference which delineates the contrasting set of expectations for sons and daughters, and which thereby destines each to their particular course of maturation and development.

Family interests are served and benefitted by the birth of a son as well as of a daughter. Mothers come to rely tremendously on the labor and support provided by daughters. A son will, in time, venture out into the working world bringing additional income into the household. Why, then, does the birth of a son merit a more public response? The public ackowledgment is motivated by feelings of anxiety and uncertainty on the part of family and close friends. They hope the boy will be economically competent, though he may grow up to be quite inept. They expect the boy's reason to flower, knowing full well that his instincts may reign for a long time, perhaps all of his life. Conversely, the birth of a girl is not cause for apprehension or doubt. There is no need to question her development, for she is already foreseen to succomb to her sexual cravings and, consequentially,

to diminish as a member of society. Until this process sets in, a parent's only concern is that she marry as a virgin, thereby upholding the family's honor. Beyond this matter, they are quite confident that their daughter will properly assume her domestic role (Ibid.:88). A boy has many expectations to meet, which implies the possibility that he may fail. The determinant of his success is the maturity of his reason; the obstacle is the power of his instinctual drives. A girl has no higher expectations to fulfill. The determinant of her demise is the cultivation of her sexuality; the obstacles are none. Thus we have two infants at the beginning of the life cycle, the male emerging sexual and impure and expected to morally ascend, the female emerging non-sexual and pure, presumed to morally languish.

Infants and small children, both female and male, are cared for and socialized within the sphere of women. These pre-puberty years demand of the mother her utmost care, caution and protection, for all early behavioral patterns are termed fixed and irreversible by Moroccans (Ibid.:57). If toilet training, weaning, physical abilities etc. have deviated from the standard Moroccan developmental model, there exists no remedy nor method of cure to manipulate a change. Not only in childhood, but in any stage of life there is culturally-instituted fear that regression will set in.

Such a notion distinguishes childcare as the meticulous guarding and protecting of children. As they are the most vulnerable prey to the 'evil eyes' of the underworld spirits and

other sources of harm, children's upbringing necessitates the assistance of saints. For the careful, conscientious mother, defensive measures are numerous. A haircut, for example, given forty days after birth indicates to all evil spirits and persons that the child is under the protective gaze of a particular saint. A mother might obtain a special flour from a saint and mix it with soup to imbue her and her child with additional strength. In general, a child is never left unguarded. As an infant, it is always tightly swaddled, periodically being unwrapped and exercised by its mother. At an early age, he or she acquires particular survival skills such as invoking the name of Allah before entering a room, and controlling the body to avoid clumsiness and injury (Ibid.:134).

One place where little children spend much of their time is at the public bath (hamman) with their mother and other female relatives. With the onset of puberty, boys begin to accompany their fathers to the male bathhouse.[2] Bouhdiba asserts that every North African Muslim child "can relive their childhood in terms of the experience of the hamman. We are born, as children, in the hamman" (1985:169). Though I would refrain from treating the bathhouse as the overriding dimension of childhood, its imprint on socialization is worth some speculation. It no doubt provides a culturally proper context in which girls begin to grow conscious of female anatomy, their own in particular. For boys, this emerging awareness does not work to their advantage. Their continual exposure and physical contact with naked female

bodies often makes their abrupt departure to the male world a painful and anomalous experience.

Though boys and girls are raised primarily by the women of the family, they become subject to subtle sex-differentiated conditioning. By age three or four they are absorbed into sex-typed play groups (Dwyer 1978b:20). Girls are taught to act politely and modestly in the company of others. Their mindfulness is linked to their staid behavior in their mother's womb. Placing themselves in a position which unshields their legs, or worse, their genitals, is immediately met with severe reprimands by elder females. As little girls, they are not yet veiled. But in juxtaposition to the learning and discovering within the privacy of the women's bathhouse, the public begins slowly to deny them recognition of their physical femininity. As boys are deemed sexual beings from the moment of conception, they are socialized in their early years to focus on their genitals. The kissing of a new-born's penis is a ritual gesture of congratulations when women see the baby for the first time. It is often said of the boy's penis, 'Hada sidhum' - 'this is his master' (Mernissi 1975:96). Moreover, some common names by which North Africans refer publicly to male genitalia are "the untamable," "the liberator," "the agitator," "the witty gambler," "the sledgehammer," "the seeker," "the discoverer," and "the enterer" (Bouhdiba 1985:147). A boy is affected by the attention paid his penis, it soon becoming an object for him to examine, to touch and to fondle. His general behavior seems consonant with his fetal characteristics. A male infant or child is more easily

stirred and angered if he lacks comfort than is a female. Such emotional upheaval is natural in the eyes of mothers. "Look, he is upset" or "Look, he is demonstrating that he is male" are typical reactions of women to their little boys (Dwyer 1978b:91).

Circumcision is a rite by which a boy is transferred from the domain of women to the domain of men. It is an event that occasions celebration and feasting among the male relatives of the family. The women are virtually excluded, keeping themselves busy preparing food and drink for the guests. The long-kept secret of circumcision, and its divulgence to the boy just prior to its occurrence, impels him in his fright to resist and escape his elders. A Moroccan Faqir shared with Kevin Dwyer the response of his own sons to circumcision:

> L'Aribi, the oldest, was first. He violently resisted. Abdallah grabbed him by the wrist and began to drag him from the central compound into the guest portion. L'Aribi cursed him and vainly tried to bite his arm... Abdallah grabbed him around the shoulders from the back, and with his right hand pushed L'Aribi's chin up so that he could not look down. Another man grabbed him around the legs.
>
> Mehdi had been able to delay his circumcision by climbing unnoticed up to the roof and hiding inside the large earthen vessel used for barley storage. It had taken half a day to find him (Dwyer 1982: 54-5).

The psychological repercussions of such an event are painful as they are disorienting. The memory lingers, now and then filling the boy with dread and remorse. Tuhami, of Meknes, "would still avoid looking at his penis for fear that it was gone, and he would dread the burning pain when he urinated" (Crapanzano

1983:51). It is not unusual for young ones to abstain from entering the compound where the rite occurred. They will be subject to teasing and threatening on the part of parents and elder kin. "Watch out or I'll take you to the circumcisor" is a common warning with which to humble and discipline a boy who is misbehaving (Dwyer 1982:56).

The anthropological literature generally discusses circumcision in the analytical framework of Van Gannep's adramatic Rite de Passage (1960). I submit, however, that in the Moroccan case no such passage necessarily transpires. A boy approaches the time of circumcision unaware of the formal privileges and duties of being male, yet already semi-consciously proud of his own sexual organs. The ritual does not succeed in instilling greater knowledge of and pride in masculinity. Rather, it stimulates fear of castration, regret over the precipitous absence of physical affection, and evasion of the father or any male elder who might dominate him (Eickelman 1976:139). If, as Crapanzano posits, "Manhood is declared by the act of mutilating the very proof of manhood" (1983:51), then the actual transformation is not intended to be realized until some years later. The sudden and tragic impact of the experience renders the circumcision rite an inseparable, unforgettable element of a boy's life. Thus not until later, with mature intelligence and reasoning, will he be able to discern and understand its social and symbolic meaning. Circumcision formally and publicly marks a Moroccan boy's new membership in the community of men, thereby consummating its separate existence from the community of women.

However, as he himself is yet incapable of attaching cultural purpose to this divergence, his passage is immature and incomplete.

III. ADOLESCENCE

The folk images of the restrained, virtuous and wise virgin girl and her frivolous, sex-driven male counterpart are rooted in the developmental traits exhibited by young Moroccans. The pessimistic overtones linked to the birth of a boy are further sharpened by his degenerate adolescent behavior. The trauma of circumcision, once subsided, gives way to concentration on sexual satisfaction. The adolescent boy carries himself in an aggressive and pestering manner, much like he does as an infant. He is neglectful of religious and social duties. Strict discipline and often punishment must be executed in order to force the boy into socially appropriate and responsible behavior. Si Abdallah explains once again:

> Only learning and discipline will develop a child's aqel until he is old enough to control his own nefs. That is why you frequently have to punish a child even if he may not have done something bad, because unless you do, his passions will later be his master (Rosen 1978: 567).

Does nefs, in fact, dictate a young boy's attitude and conduct? Ethnographic data provided by Mernissi indicate that it does to a notable degree. His phallic pride, systematically instilled in infancy and early childhood, leads to the perception that society will be geared towards his sexual needs. The revelation of sexual segregation, and the impossibility of seeing a female face and figure underneath veil and hooded gown (djellabah), result in

heightened sexual preoccupation and often depression (Mernissi 1975). Should a boy attempt to defy the sexual barriers, his parents will be quick in taking disciplinary action. Serious problems arise however, when a boy of twenty years is beginning to think about marriage and his sexual wants cause him to defy the whole notion of maintaining female virginity. This conflict is evidenced by letters such as the following which appeared in popular magazine advice columns in the city of Meknes:

> I am 23 years old. I met a girl who is 17 years old. I fell in love with her and went to her parents and asked her hand in marriage. But one day, my sexual desire overwhelmed me and therefore, I deprived her of her treasure, of her honor. This happened after we had written the marriage contract though. We don't want to tell her parents because we have not had the ceremony yet (Ibid.:56).

Such rebelliousness is carried to its logical extreme, when older adolescents begin to question the parental right to arrange marriages. Of the magazine letters that Mernissi read concerning this problem, 70% were written by older adolescents, and of those, 80% were by males who claimed they would marry without parental permission (Ibid.:56).

Such concerns of a typical Moroccan boy are a critical factor in the uneasy avoidance relationship he develops with his father. Neither may exhibit any kind of sexual-related actions or gestures in each other's presence, nor may they speak of sexuality in any context (Dwyer 1978b:127). A son grows more and more aware that what his father hopes for and expects of him is still far from being realized. "The values which the father attempts to inculcate in his son, namely the rightness of hard

work under his father's eyes in the service of the household, are almost impossible to demonstrate" (Maher 1974:109). Thus the respect and reverence a son holds for his father is marred by the fear of failing before him. That the father is so demanding of his son, and that the demands are communicated from a carefully kept distance, is what makes for a tense, sometimes precarious relationship. This maintains the longing of an adolescent boy for maternal support and affection.

An adolescent female is referred to by Moroccans as bint which translates into female child, daughter, and virgin (Dwyer 1978b:62). Here, virgin is the key meaning, for it is the daughter's virginity upon which rests a family's social honor. In this stage of life, a Moroccan girl becomes more active in the social and economic world of her mother. She remains within the confines of the household learning such domestic tasks as childcare, washing and cleaning, cooking and sewing. She may occasionally accompany her mother to the sug, or market. By age twelve or thirteen, a girl must be proficient in household work, and she may be considered a suitable marriage partner. The care and self-effacement of a young girl is described by Vanessa Maher who studied the economic lives of Moroccan women in Akhdar:

> The scene is one of people lying propped on their elbows talking and laughing: occasionally one issues an order to the girl who flits in and out at their whim. She settles now and then to the conversation...or to giggle and whisper with the women and children in the next room if the guests are unrelated men (1974:111).

It is during adolescence and closer to the time of marriage that

a girl and her mother become friends (Dwyer 1978b, Maher 1974). Providing economic as well as emotional support for her mother, she receives social advice and maternal protection in return. She learns the secret means of assuring her safety against the perilous doings of men. She comes to understand the veil she has now begun to wear whenever in public.

The father-daughter relationship is stiff and strained. A daughter refrains from laughing, joking, even singing in her father's presence. The success of a daughter in fulfilling her role is commonly the locus of conflict between father and son. She is a constant reminder of her brother's fatuity. Her sufficient performance of domestic duties merely highlights his inabilities in the public sphere (Maher 1974:110).

As circumcision is the first traumatic life change for a boy, so too is marriage the first for a girl. Despite last minute worries that she is already deflowered parents generally approach their daughter's wedding with a great sense of relief. The wedding commences with the parading of the bride's dowry through the neighborhood streets.[3] Men and women remain segregated throughout the ceremony, each caught up with their own celebration and rejoicing in their own particular way. Elizabeth Fernea witnessed the transformation of Marrakshi women as they became engulfed in their own private wedding party:

> Once across the threshold everything changed. The public mien was cast aside. One was at home, and one assumed a different personality. Off came the veils, the hoods and djellabas...(1980:137).

> Dancing had spread to the guests and was in progress all around the courtyard. The sun had set, the electricity had been turned on: caftans glowed and jewelry flashed as the women moved, singly and in pairs, around the room to the throbbing beat of the drums (Ibid.:142).

While bride and groom meet in their chambers, the guests continue dancing and singing until the couple emerge with the blood-stained sheet - the eagerly-awaited evidence of the bride's broken hymen and the consummation of the marriage.

Initially, a bride (usually age seventeen or eighteen), hardly imagines herself to be a wife, and faces her new role with much ambivalence. As a wife, she earns a high status; she will begin to participate in women's social events and, in time, will be sought out as a source of financial and emotional support. Yet, she is now a member of her spouse's household where, in many cases, she must contend with alien male and female kin (Mernissi 1975:73). Furthermore, she may still be quite young and thus suffer the loss of childhood friends (Dwyer 1978b:73). Considering these changes, marriage is at once similar to and different from male circumcision. A girl's childhood and adolescent life is geared towards her role as wife, and soon, as mother. Moreover, she has been made aware of the coming of marriage and, depending on her age, may have been courted by her husband prior to its occurrence. This is markedly different from the situation of a boy who has no conception of circumcision until it is essentially forced upon him. His early childhood socialization, by virtue of its association with women's domain, opposes his role as a male. The difference in the ages at which

these events occur, might also account for the disparities in traumatic impact.

The common denominator is the feeling of exile that pervades these life cycle episodes. Now a member of male society, a boy is subject to a new set of expectations and obligations. Similarly, by the rules of virilocal marriage, a girl must face living with virtual strangers in a foreign household environment. In contrast to a boy's circumcision experience, a girl better understands and more readily consents to the life change brought on by marriage. However, both constitute transformations from the familiar to the unfamiliar; both are constricted by feelings of ejection and displacement.

IV. ADULTHOOD: Men and Women Apart

The territorial circumscription of Moroccan sexuality becomes most pronounced during the years of adulthood. Social, economic, and religious life operate under male and female systems which function independently one from the other. Contrary to traditional presumptions and analyses, the scenario of an expansive, ambitious male world surrounding a constricted, passive female world cannot be found in urban Morocco. Rather, we shall see how women uphold their own systems that are complex and powerful in their own right and, moreover, how both spheres are governed by similar cultural rules and social aspirations.

A. Economic Worlds

As adults, men concern themselves with building social networks in the public world. Such a pursuit carries a fundamental paradox; men aim to safeguard their autonomy and dominance as an individual, yet they can only do so by entering into relationships of obligation. Rosen explains that in Sefrou, "the fundamental unit is not some aggregate of persons, but the single individual acting as the locus of a set of personal ties and personal attributes" (1984:112). The wider one's network, the more prestige he will earn. However, it will crystallize and dissipate as one's personal circumstances and needs evolve. One man's offer of support, and another's response to this offer, is the basic process through which relationships are initiated in

the political, economic, and religious arenas. The market institution of Sefrou will serve as ground on which to analyze this process.

The foreigner cannot be any less than perplexed and bedazzled at the first sight of a Middle Eastern market in full motion. The initial images and impressions are best described by Clifford Geertz:

> Hundreds of men, this one in rags, that one in silken robe, the next in some outlandish costume, jammed into alleyways, squatting in cubicles, milling in plazas, shouting in each others' faces, whispering in each others' ears, smothering each other in cascades of gestures, grimaces and glares- the whole enveloped in a smell of donkeys, a clatter of carts, and an accumulation of material objects God himself could not inventory...sensory confusion brought to a majestic pitch (1979:197).

This riot of activity and movement, in all its clammer and chaos, is daily routine life for the men of Morocco and of the Arab world at large. The range of people who attend the market in any and all capacities, covers many economic and ethnic sub-groups of Moroccan society. In 1968-9, Geertz counted one thousand and thirteen shops in the bazaar, of which the owners represented no less that "sixty-six different locally recognized ethnic-like categories" (Ibid.:141). In order to distinguish identities among this dense, culturally-varied mass that swarms the market daily, Moroccans employ two general modes of classification. The word nisba translates into lineage or relativity, and signifies one's ethnic and kinship affiliations (Rosen 1984:20). However, due to the enormous flexibility of the term, it can only classify within given, individual social contexts.[4]

The category of occupation is perhaps more clearly demarcated than that of ethnicity. Market attendants fall into two occupational groups. There are the artisans, who produce all the items and goods that are exchanged and distributed throughout the market. And there are the buyers and sellers; the artisan's crafts are sold to a seller who, in turn, sells them to a buyer (Geertz 1979:183). Interestingly, Moroccans neither consider buyers and sellers distinctive roles, nor do they discriminate between them in terms of status. Similarly, the three types of artisans (masters, journeymen, and apprentices) are not formally distinguishable except by the difference in title (Ibid.:190).

There exists a third role which is of a different nature altogether. The amin, the garantor or trustee, is called upon to mediate in solving disputes between bargaining parties. Rooted in the general Middle Eastern belief that a dispute is most effectively settled with the presence of one well-known, trustworthy witness, the amin, in the market and every other walk of life, simply seeks to unearth the facts of the case and present his own conclusions. A successful settlement enhances his status; failure to reach one shames his reputation.

The furious, never-ending search for information is what governs all activity and interaction in the market. This information includes economic data - prices, quantity and quality of goods being sold, and social data - who is reliable and should be sought out, who is deceitful and should be avoided. The correct information in either case is difficult to come by for it

is "generally poor, scarce, maldistributed, inefficiently communicated, and intensely valued" (Ibid.:124). Thus, a man is challenged to sort out the baseless, fraudulent information from that which which is well-grounded and truthful. He must evaluate the virtue of a relationship, and the earnesty of a contract or promise. Such aims are pursued in a diffuse, personalistic, constantly changing environment where the minutest of standards of manipulation and honesty are very rarely clear.

Patron-client relationships are therefore the satest means of obtaining genuine facts and information, and of protecting one's personal interests. The relationship is not one of asymmetry, but rather, one of opposition and competition between equals. The regular repetition of bargaining lends an element of constancy to the fluidity and restlessness of the market setting. It "provides men who, amid the suspicions that haunt the suq, have managed to develop enough confidence to imagine trading with one another" (Ibid.:221). The bargaining process, circumscribed by technical as well as moral rules, facilitates the personal gain of men who are at once in opposition to and support of one another.

It is necessary to point out that though the market is deemed an exclusively male public zone, women can often be seen crossing over its borders, and congregating in its discrete corners. Women, no doubt by their very presence, pose a threat to the internal order of the market, which becomes most acute when they challenge men in a bargaining exchange. Women abide by the same rules of negotiation and are treated by men with the

same etiquette. Maher and Mernissi both point out that women are increasingly active in the market institution (Maher 1974; Mernissi 1975). According to Dwyer, women themselves often sell their own wares and obtain a meager income to which their husbands have no access (1978b:17). Women are cautious in sufficiently veiling themselves in respect of men and their claim to this particular public space. This does not, however, curb the threat of women and certainly does not hush their confidence and valiance in opening and closing a bargaining exchange with men.[5]

Relative to the bazaar institution, the domestic economic life of women constitutes a more exclusive, tightly-knit sphere with its own autonomous hierarchy of status and occupation. While it does not welcome the overwhelming bastion of ethnic diversity that does the market, the female domestic system is shaped by complex, continually shifting networks connecting related as well as non-related women. It comprises the neighborhood of houses and alleyways closed off to strangers by high walls in which women move freely and unveiled, in which they exchange gifts, borrow, lend, and support in a framework that is their own, shielded from the disruption of men.

The economic world of women, like that of men, is structured around relations of reciprocal obligation. The patron-client tie is not, however, formed by two women who are equals. Writes Maher, "poorer women wash the floors, run messages, and help at the feasts of richer women who call them 'sister,' lend them

money, invite their families to meals, and make them gifts" (1974:43). In other words, the client performs specific household services and the patron, who is of higher economic and social status, supplies her with various material rewards. A patron and client may or may not be of kinship relation; if they are (and the closer their relation), the inequalities will be of lesser consequence. Variation in this relationship occurs in terms of its permanence, the degree of the patron's control, the extent of the client's respect, and the actual goods and services that are being exchanged. Furthermore, a woman may occupy the role of patron and client simultaneously such as one Akhdar woman, Baha, who worked as a maid for a government official and with her earnings, employed her own clients (Ibid.:40-43).

Daily life gathers women into domestic circles in which they cooperate and share in the performance of household tasks. These circles, or units, are characterized by a marked system of authority, status, and division of labor. Higher status is accorded those women who are married, who have born children, and most importantly, who are of closest kin relation to the female head of the household. The more peripheral members are non-kin persons such as widows, divorcees, descendants of black slaves (hartanyin), and foster children (Ibid.:122). The higher-ranked women delegate tasks to those of lower rank. In addition, they see to it that all duties are carried out efficiently and completely. Washing, cleaning, and laundering tasks are customarily distributed among the non-kin and farther removed kin

members, while cooking and food preparatory responsibilities are assigned to the more central members of the group (Ibid.:123 see Table 15). These domestic economic cells are not necessarily fixed in terms of their membership. Participants, as they age, marry, divorce, and perhaps remarry, change their place of residence, and will thus be attached to several different geographically and familially situated household circles over the course of their adult lives.

Similar to the male world, the female world is pervaded by the dissemination and collection of information. Behind the walls, or atop the rooves, women's work is accompanied by highly-charged social gossip about the neighborhood men and women (Rosen 1984:84). Who is diligent and hard-working, or lazy and clumsy? Who is obedient and respectful, or selfish and shameful? Such knowledge is an inexpendable resource in finding suitable marriage partners, reliable familial allies, and prosperous patron-client relationships.

I would suggest that despite a system of status differentiation, the socio-economic lives of urban middle class women in Morocco, function in an environment of general cooperation and unity. Louise Lamphere claims that where public and domestic spheres are more sharply bounded and separate, women are at conflict with one another and conversely, where the spheres are more integrated, they share common goals and needs and provide mutual support (1974:100). I believe the Moroccan case challenges this model on the following grounds: The necessity of economic cooperation and emotional interdependence

is the direct result of the very division of sex in society. The simulation of kinship relations in Akhdar discussed by Maher is a clear indication of female solidarity. The aforementioned category of non-kin represents, in many cases, women who are in need of a female unit of which they may be a legitimate member. They may be in want of the protection, guidance, and companionship which, alienated from their uterine kin, they have been deprived. The inclusion of non-kin expresses an overall arrangement which caters to their emotional needs, and to the labor demands of the women who take them in.

The reaction of men to this independent functioning of women further illustrates the viability and unity of women's domestic world. Publicly, men describe their world as one wrought by competition, division, and egocentrism (Dwyer 1978b:33). Maher tells us that men actually feel threatened by it; the income and authority of well-off men are undermined by extra-market female avenues of support, and those who are unemployed are humiliated by having to rely on this support (1974:223).

Eickelman discusses the concept of qaraba, that is, the closeness and unity of a quarter or neighborhood which encompasses all inhabitants except childless couples, homeless men, and the very poor (1976:100). I would say that it is the interplay of economic, social and emotional relationships within the intimate confines of the home (that is daily secluded from men), which creates an experience of qaraba uniquely female in its expression and internalization.

B. Religious Worlds

It is neither marriage nor fatherhood, asserts Dwyer, that attributes responsibility and respectability to a Moroccan man. Rather, it is the elder man of religious virtue and piety who ultimately bears honor and prestige in the eyes of both men and women (1978b:105). Why is a religious man seen in such a light? What does he do, or is expected to do, that is so revered? A man devoted to Allah is commanded not to suppress his physical needs, but to delicately balance them with his mental needs. Thus, the duty to fast the month of Ramadan symbolizes the expectation of men to regulate their nature according to the rules of Islam (Eickelman 1976:37). To prioritize, to stifle one human proclivity and liberate another, is considered less difficult to attain than an even compartmentalization of both. If this is the general backdrop of male religious life, what are men actually doing and accomplishing on a day-to-day basis?

Throughout their adult lives, the religious Sufi orders draw men into their rings, providing them with a social (and often economic) peer group. The focus of Sufi brotherhood devotionalism is a saint (<u>marabout</u>) or demon. The more ecstatic brotherhoods offer curing treatment for those possessed by a demon. The Hamadsha, a Brotherhood particularly active in the city of Meknes, are devoted to Aisha Qandisha (Crapanzano 1972:332-3), a female demon with "pendulous breasts and lips and her favorite pasttime is to assault men in the streets and in dark places, to induce them to have sexual intercourse with her, and ultimately

to penetrate their bodies and stay with them forever" (Mernissi 1975:12). The Hamadsha are intimately tied to Aisha Qandisha, and ensure that she is appeased by her victims so that they will not be harmed.

In a typical gathering of the Hamadsha there is responsive reading of alternated prayers, tales and myths. The climax is the Hedra, the devotees' dance which invokes the presence of the female demon. One dancer describes his experience to Crapanzano:

> I am hot and breathe heavily. I feel myself throbbing...It is frightening. I see only Aisha...it is Aisha who makes me hit my head. I see her in front of me. She has a piece of iron. She is hitting her head. When Aisha stops hitting, so do I. Then I continue to dance (1980:19).

Once appeased through such a dance, Aisha Qandisha becomes protector of her victim, rather than his enemy. According to Tuhami, who claimed to be possessed by Aisha, other means of appeasement are "wearing certain colors, burning incense, trips to her sanctuary, dancing to music that pleases her" (Ibid.:19).

I will now outline some of the main currents of maraboutic ideology and emphasize how they weave into the everyday lives of Moroccan men. A marabout, or saint, is one who is tied to God as well as to other men. His power arises from baraka, the grace or blessing of Allah. The actual substantiality of baraka is legitimized or indeed falsified depending on the faith of a client, and his public expression of that faith (Eickelman 1976:180). Thus, the perception of the client can be said to determine, to perpetuate, or to obstruct the functioning power of a saint.

The marabout-client relationship, like all others, operates through mutual obligation. All requests to a marabout must be made with a concomitant offer or promise. Says one member of the Sherqawa Brotherhood, "You must bring something to open a matter with God" (Ibid.:178). The quality of the offering is the most important sign of a client's belief in a marabout's power. A marabout must, in turn, be generous and benevolent to his client. Though a successful, positive relationship lends stability and security to the client's life, he will often break off ties with one saint and approach another.

Dale F. Eickelman's study of the Sherqawa Brotherhood in Boujad provides fascinating insight into the Moroccan conception of maraboutic identity, and the dynamics of religious and social life. There exists, first of all, a genealogical boundary around maraboutic membership, though it is indeed permeable and oftentimes quite transparent. Sherqawis, identified as the descendants of Saint Sidi Muhammed Sherqi, fall into eight descent groups which each occupy a town quarter in Boujad (1976:184). Descendants say they inherited mystical knowledge through a particular name, and are now Brotherhood members or independent religious scholars. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, it is quite common for men who are prominent figures in the Sherqawi social networks, to simply claim themselves Sherqawis. Eickelman terms such an inroad as claiming "closeness" (Ibid.:188). There are groups that maintain a sharper awareness of their genealogical frontier, and who make a

concerted effort to keep a registrar of their members. Similar to the simulated domestic kin groups of women, the socio-religious circles perhaps serve as metaphors for actual maraboutic lineages. A factor which further supports this assertion is the general absence of collective expression of a Sherqawi descent group, save the formal visits paid by group representatives to the community prayer-leader (Imam), and the flag that is draped over their particular shrine (Ibid.:199).

Religion and economics are intertwined domains in Moroccan male life. Sufi Brotherhoods seem to correlate with occupational categories and economic classes. For example, the Tijaniyya order in Tarouddant encourages the display of wealth and is therefore only open to the upper echelons of society (Dwyer 1978c:595). Sefrouis classify occupations in terms of dirtiness and cleanliness. The dirty occupations (eg. butchers, peddlers, smiths) correspond to the more ecstatic Brotherhoods whereas the clean ones (eg. grocers, tailors, clothsellers) are associated with the more reserved orders (Geertz 1969:156). However, not only are these two concepts not hierarchically understood, but there is also, once again, relativity and flexibility in the classification of occupations. In Sefrou there is also a physical link between work and religion:

> The darkened prayer house lined with men telling beads, and the cobbled alleyway thronged with men striking bargains, were only separated by a doorsill: outside one could hear the chants as one passed; inside, the clatter as one knelt (Ibid.:155).

The male Muslim religious world is often characterized by

anthropologists as formal and collective (Dwyer 1978b; Mernissi 1975). I find elements that, to the contrary, bear resemblence to the pattern of male economic life. The majority of a man's religious involvement is through his individual exchanges with saints and demons which are all set within the reciprocity of duty and reward, of material offer and personal gain. The role a man assumes and the recognition he receives stem from the accumulation of social connections. Though a man is drawn into the religious activity of his neighborhood from the outset of adult life, his initial primary motivation is the acquisition of channels into male social circles. I find that, contrary to the general folk image as conveyed by Dwyer (1978a; 1978b), later religious affiliation does not necessarily become detached from routine social life. Rather, it remains quite absorbed into all walks of men's lives, economics in particular. Moreover, religion seems to operate within the same personalistic rules and guidelines of public and private male social intercourse.

Women are virtually extraneous to the religious world of men. Many of the public religious structures and premises are closed off to women. In Tarouddant, "Women are prohibited from praying in the main Muslim worship areas that are located in the mosques; it is said that if they should menstruate there, the mosque and all those within it would fall into a state of pollution" (Dwyer 1978b:17). The sexual ideology puts women not just on the outskirts, but completely outside of religion. According to Dwyer, womanhood contradicts sainthood. A woman has

only two means of attaining sainthood - to dedicate her entire life exclusively to religious prayer while maintaining her virginity, or to meet her death through supernatural intervention (Ibid.:79). In short, only if a woman dies, or secludes herself forever from human society, can she be considered a saint. Sainthood has no place on the usual female developmental continuum. Similarly, whereas dancing the Hedra is one of many ways in which men can practice religion, it is the only means through which women can reach spiritual salvation (Maher 1974:100). Again, ordinary piety is simply not sufficient for women who are perceived to be less pure than men.

So what of the religious world of women? How does a woman express herself religiously as an individual and as a member of the female community? The making and breaking of saintly affiliations is, as it is among men, one of the key elements of women's religious involvement. It is worth noting that there do exist a few female Moroccan saints with whom women engage. The shrine of Lalla Soliha is attended by those who desire lovers; Lalla Mimuna helps women predict the weather; Lalla Mbaraka is embodied in a stone that is carried by women who wish for good health (Dwyer 1978c:587). Although women are predominantly concerned with the protection of children (as discussed in Part I), they often place requests specifically for themselves such as "relief from stomach pains or 'pinching bones', the preservation of a marriage, or simply good luck" (Crapanzano 1972:337). Women enthusiastically greet the chance to switch saintly affiliations. Some saints are known to be more kind and permissive than others.

However, others are notorious for penalizing women who are wont to engage in a dual or even triple allegiance. Si Ahmad Tijanyi, for example, "is said to have told his believers that anyone who took another saint in his stead would die in a state of apostacy" (Dwyer 1978c:591). As they are burdened with domestic duties and increasing kinship responsibilities, older women search for saints who are more flexible in their religious rules and their ritual demands. In fact, there exist orders and shrines particularly for elder women which attract new members (without formal initiation) on a continual basis (Ibid.:594).[6]

The daily domestic routine of Moroccan women is often interspersed with religious gatherings, sometimes open to the neighborhood, other times held for a particular kin group. Women dance their version of the Hedra, though the singers and musicians are not viewed as members of mainstream urban Moroccan society (Maher 1974:91). The Arabic word sadaqa refers to selfless, extraordinarily generous action through which one acquires aajr, or merit. Women perform sadaqa by opening their homes and offering an elaborate feast to close female kin and neighborhood friends (Maher 1974:99).

Women occupy several other types of religious roles. In the early twentieth century, Edward Westermarck reported the following about female curers in Fez:

> ...when a person is ill, an umm-jnun or haunted woman is asked to cure him. She goes about town with a dagger in her mouth, begging of the shop-keepers "ransom for the sake of God." They give her various things, such as sugar, candles, wheat, butter, money and so forth...She paints her hands

> and feet with henna and arranges in the evening a performance in her own house, with her haddamat, or believers, as invited guests (1926:345).

In contemporary Tarouddant, the majority of curers are women who claim their powers are hereditary. They are denied, on account of their sex, the title which publicly signifies the status of a saintly descendant; their power is nonetheless recognized by women as well as by men (Dwyer 1978c:589).

A woman may also act as shuwafa, or fortune-teller. Fernea records a bit of conversation between one fortune-teller, wrapped in white grasping a bracelet and a string of cowrie shells, and a sick, hapless Marrakshi girl:

> Shuwafa: Men will offer to marry you, but you do not wish to marry them and your parents agree with your decision.
>
> Najiya: But why? Why don't I want to marry them?
>
> Shuwafa: Because they are not of your family...
>
> Najiya: Of course, of course.
>
> Shuwafa: So, you wait at home until your cousin is ready to give you a good home, and this marriage will take place as soon as your headaches and earaches are finished (1976:300).

Based on such an account, the shuwafa seems to act as a sort of sounding board which helps women to face up to the most personal of conflicts and misfortunes.

Women are often spoken of in reference to their indulgence in sorcery and witchcraft. A wife is commonly accused of resorting to these underworld powers by her spouse's female kin as in the case of Naima, an Akhdar woman:

> Naima's husband fell ill with hepatitis, and in

> his delirium was unable to recognize his sisters who had come to visit him. They accused his wife, who was weeping helplessly, of bewitching him (Maher 1974:102).

Some of the calamities that women are said to inflict through sorcery are male impotence, female barreness, illness, and financial disaster (Crapanzano 1980:113). Often under the threat of men, women "are forced to turn to intrigue and attempt to redress the balance of power, on a personal level, by means of witchraft" (Maher 1974:102). As sorcerer, fortune-teller, and curer, woman reveals her well-hidden religious powers. Just as men undercut the strength of the female domestic economic system, so do they also view the religious doings of women with contempt, hoping to publicly dismiss the power, belief and expression that pervades the female world.

The male and female realms of life seem to share some critical processes and elements, which thereby challenges some basic anthropological assumptions about gender and society. We find that both worlds are indeed complex and expansive in and of themselves. Clearly, the female domestic realm is not narrow and limiting, for it has been shown that women create and maintain their own support systems as well as their own frameworks for religious expression.

Secondly, the material, economic definition of 'resource' has led to the common-place presupposition that it is always something controlled by men and barred from women (Rogers 1978:154). The data, however, force us to extend the term resource to include information and knowledge, a constantly-

pursued item that is invaluable to female and male interests in their respective contexts.

Thirdly, the Moroccan case does not apply to Rosaldo's positional/personal paradigm of male and female social life. She posits that men, by virtue of their public lives, achieve their goals and pursue their relationships from positions, that is, from politically prescribed roles that are ranked within official, formal hierarchies; conversely, women, lacking formally-recognized roles and systems of power in their domestic world, live out their lives from a personal, relational-oriented perspective (1974:126-7). Nancy Chodorow follows suit as she claims in her article on feminine personality that men do not have "the extended personal relations women have...their relationships with other men tend to based not on particularistic connection or affictive ties, but rather on abstract, universalistic role expectations" (1974:53). The root of this sexual difference, Chodorow says, is in the weakness of the female "sense of self" (Ibid.:59). Moroccan social life, in economics and religion, among men and women, proceeds in a highly personalistic fashion. Both sexes approach relationships within the parameters of their individual life needs and wants. They enter negotiations with the hope of realizing personal gain, and with the fear of suffering any possible loss. It is as important for a woman to preserve a sense of security and strength in her relationships with others as it is for a man. Political and religious titles exist and are awarded in the public world;

likewise, religious and social status prevail in that of the domestic. However, title and status are interpreted in both worlds according to very specific relational contexts, and their value and meaning are derived from the benefits yielded by those relationships.

The home is the domain of women from which men are removed during the course of a day. A man who does spend an excessive amount of time hanging around essentially violates sexual frontiers, making himself the object of derision and mockery by males as well as females. What, then, transpires when a man does cross into this space? Does it remain female-dominated despite his periodic presence? What means of power and influence does a woman have at her disposal to use in spite of and against him? I will discuss in this section the strategies of power available to women as they assume seniority in the household.[7] Finally, I will consider the marriage relationship as a microcosm of the sexual antagonism that permeates general urban Moroccan society.

Let us first clarify the roles of the father in the home and the status he is accorded. At first glance, it seems that when men enter the home it is transformed from a female to a male space, as indicated by Mernissi's observations:

> When a man invites a friend to share a meal at his house he knocks on the door and asks with a loud voice for the women to 'make the way.' The women then run to hide in dark corners, leaving the courtyard free to be crossed by a stranger (1975:51).

Thus, even within domestic, familial space, women are perceived by and indeed respond to men as if they themselves do not belong, as though they are trespassers on their own territory.

The father is the legal care-taker of his children (Dwyer

1978b:27). He is expected to bring to them the material benefits of the external economic world. In the event of divorce, children over two years of age are assigned to his custody; if he is a widower, they remain with his wife until he remarries (Maher 1974:201). The father bears the official, technical responsibilities of his children's marriages. He handles the exchange of money and goods between families, decides the date of the wedding, and contractually validates the marriage agreement in the presence of the court's scribes (Dwyer 1978b:27).

A husband has a certain leverage in drawing his wife into cooperative ties with his affines. Her own kin, at least in her early years of marriage, will lay low, allowing the wife to secure her position within her husband's household. One Akhdar woman, acknowledging that her new grandchild was a member of its father's kin group, did not attend to her daughter's birth. Well before this, when the couple moved into their new home, she announced to her daughter, "We won't visit you much now, so that you can get used to living on your own" (Maher 1974:129). A husband, then, seems to exercise his most vital power over his wife at the outset of marriage, when she is a frightened and vulnerable newcomer to the household, when the possibility of seeking refuge among her own kin is temporarily obsolete. Yet, at the same time, his youth and inexperience renders him (as well as his wife), powerless and often helpless against the towering authority not of his father, but of his mother.

A woman is most feared and venerated in her role as mother-

in-law. In relation to her son's wife she occupies two alternating roles - one moment she is friend and teacher; the very next, she is enemy and competitor. In the first position she provides her daughter-in-law instructions about beautification techniques, curing treatments, giving birth, contending with men, etc. As the wife has been thrust from her own mother and female kin, such a valuable resource becomes a necessity of day-to-day living. One woman from Meknes remembers her mother-in-law with understanding and appreciation:

> You see, with all that she did to me, with all her tyranny, I remember my mother-in-law with peace...I realize now how complex a person she was...for example, she was very elegant, always dressed up and seated with alot of poise and majesty, with her jewelry and her neat headgear. She always wanted us to be elegant, well-dressed so that people would not say she had sloppy brides...she was terribly refined (Mernissi 1975:72).

The son/husband is commonly the source of pronounced, even public hostility of his mother towards his wife. Mernissi relates a story in which a woman's husband bought her a bra apparently without letting his mother know. Upon discovering this, the mother raged on and on about the son's negligence of her, and then claimed his behavior was the result of his wife's witchcraft (Ibid.:76).

Dwyer offers a somewhat different situation of the mother-son-wife conflict. Omar, his wife Latifa, and their two children lived with his mother and divorced sister. Due to the wife's unsatisfactory performance of household duties, there developed a great rift between her and Omar's mother, which culminated in

Latifa's running away. The problem was legally settled with both parties (Omar and Latifa; Mother and Sister) living completely separate lives within the same compound. Omar aimed to stay aligned to both parties having, thus, to constantly appease his mother who constantly ridiculed his wife. Relinquishing the option to choose one and upset the status quo, he instead became the element of continuity answering to the whims of all the women with whom he lived (Dwyer 1976).

Another Moroccan recalls how he himself became angry when when his wife refused to wash his clothes. Expressing his desire to take her back to her family, his mother stormed, "Shut-up! It was I who brought her into this house, not you. And I'm the one who tells her what to do in this house, not you. And if anyone is going to send her back to her father, it will be me" (Dwyer 1982:106). What we see, therefore, is a triangle of household members who vie to achieve and safeguard the respect and power that each feels is their due right. The mother seems to win the battles, at least as long as her son and daughter-in-law remain within her home.

In terms of control, management, and status within the household, the mother-in-law comes out ahead of all others. First, the deference she commands is both a formal and public requirement. Her son's wife (or wives) must refer to her as 'Lalla,' or 'mistress.' Fatiha, a Meknes informant to Mernissi recalls the importance of the hand-kissing ritual:

> We [the son's wives] had to kiss her hand twice a day, in the morning and after sunset...When I

> sometimes forgot that hand, the world was turned upside down. She would engineer a whole show... When my husband came home she would attack him. "Your wife is getting insolent. I have to put up with her insolence in silence because I love you and I don't want to create problems...Son, today she forgot to kiss my hand at sunset. She is taking more and more liberties with the rules (1975:75).

Secondly, the respect paid the mother-in-law is connected to her control over space within the home. Because she is so envious of her son's wives, she does what she can to block their right to privacy. To leave the main room after a meal is to show dissent; thus all but her husband are required to wait until she finishes and excuses herself. To close a door in her presence is to pay her disrespect; hence no one may retire to their quarters until the mother has done so. If the son and his wife move out due to a job opportunity or for any such economic reason, the mother reads this as none other than a conspiracy against her. She knows well that such a change would grant her daughter-in-law the power over husband and household that she herself has thus far appropriated (Ibid.:72).

The third element of a mother's control are the food resources of the household. She holds the key to the storage room at all times. She distributes food and cooking ingredients as she sees necessary. Fatiha of Meknes, points out that her mother-in-law "was in charge of everything. She had the power to decide what to eat, the quality and quantity, and she had the key. I could not use food except with her permission" (Ibid.:75). Clearly, the mother-in-law is first in command. Those underneath her wing are obligated to revere, respect and obey her in and out

of the company of men. It even seems safe to term her power and status as formal; for if they are unintentionally negated, as in the case of Fatiha, it is interpreted as an upfront challenge to rules and patterns of behavior which are fixed within the context of the home.

There are yet other powers which are granted a woman in her later years. The ability to arrange marriages for her children is of the most important. A woman initiates and carries through a rigorous investigation of prospective marriage partners as she has access to information that a man, excluded from the domestic realm, simply cannot reach. Her inquiry begins in the bathhouse, the most effective information agency in which all kinds of secrets of neighborhood families are sought out and exposed (Eickelman 1976:84). If she is seeking a bride for her son, it is in the public bath that she can survey the girl, speak with her, and gradually build up a very intimate knowledge of her physical person (Mernissi 1975:70). After numerous sessions of meticulous observing, canvassing, and consulting, the woman enters negotiations with the parents of the girl. The kin of both families meet, the woman's final offer is presented in the form of gifts and a formal feast (during which the prospective bride and groom meet one another), and finally, the specific terms of bride payment are discussed and settled (Maher 19174:164).

Oftentimes, a woman will be called upon as intermediary to move two negotiating families from a stalemate to a final settlement. She is customarily a post-menopausal woman, and is

thereby granted freer movement and ability to deal directly with the men of both families without any objections (Ibid.:48). The advantage of such a role is the establishment of connections with families in farther away regions. This can become a valued public channel through which to build oneself a social network that extends well beyond the neighborhood.

In reference to arranging marriages, Dwyer describes men as the key spokespersons, and women as merely secondary voices of influence (1978b:127). However, the data thus far suggest the converse. Men may indeed see to the contractual duties of marriage which, in the West, constitute the most critical, legitimizing aspect of any arrangement, agreement, or economic relationship. But it is the women who are actually creating the alliances through observation and direct verbal interchange, a force which, in the Arab context, is far more publicly and privately valued than the written word. I propose further that this power of negotiation can, due to their seclusion, only be executed by women, and that the female monopoly of the entire process is recognized by all males of the household.

As an extension of marriage-arranging, a woman utilizes the right to, with fair reason, intervene in a marriage on behalf of her daughter. In general, a wife's mother and female kin will consider intervention if her new household does not appear socially and economically sound. Should crises arise, they will immediately deliver her from the marriage. One woman, for example, became worried about her son-in-law's failure to secure

medical care for her sick daughter. She finally produced the money herself to finance her daughter's treatment which represented a clear transgression of the husband's conjugal rights (Maher 1974:128). More often, the husband, quite alert to the familial support network of his wife, fears her departure and does what he can to block her from seeking out their help.

The general control over and loyalty of her children is another index of women's power in the domestic realm. As previously discussed, the socialization and discipline of children is delegated to the mother. The distant authoritarianism of the father compels a maturing boy or girl (though the boy more apprehensively), to look to their mother for affection, solutions to problems, support etc (Dwyer 1978b). In time, a mother capitalizes on the relationship she shares with her children, ensuring that they will be near her in times of misfortune, lend her financial help, stand by her side in a marital crisis, provide her a home in the event that she is widowed.

The fusion of women's space and children's space has important implications for male and female religious involvement as well. The intensity of women's maraboutic ties in early married life is the primary determining factor of her children's affiliations. As Dwyer points out, men commence religious activities later in life than do women, so it is not until they are middle-aged (age 40-50) that they begin to enmesh themselves in more observant religious orders (Dwyer 1978c:595). The developmental dynamic of religious association allows women to

claim the early opportunity in affecting the activity of their children, and leading them into their own network of affiliations. Men essentially forfeit their own influence in this area, thereby leaving women to transmit to their children a religion that is largely their own.

The intensification of sexual polarity in Moroccan adulthood comes to be mirrored in the marital relationship. The discrepancies between the legal rights of and constraints upon husband and wife are notable (Dwyer 1979; Mernissi 1975:60), and the ways in which the wife circumvents the system exposes the raw abrasiveness that is sometimes felt in the relationship with her spouse. Let us first ask what are the legal causes and consequences of divorce. A woman often initiates a divorce on the grounds of her husband's failure to provide her with shelter, food, or clothing, a legal obligation explicitly stated under Article 36 of the 1957 Moroccan Code (Ibid.:60). A man might repudiate his marriage in the event of his wife's neglect of domestic chores, her commitment of adultery, or her inability to have children (Maher 1974:199). If the wife is found guilty by the court, she forfeits bridewealth as well as her furnishings; if the husband is guilty, he must relinquish his wife's possessions and pay a settlement which is part of the bridewealth (Ibid.:201).

It should be noted that material property is a point of grave concern to the male spouse. Besides the fact that marriage itself is a costly affair, woman's legal ownership of her

possessions poses an economic threat to her husband. For example, Mohamed's wife persistently nagged and involved him in long arguments. Though he desired a divorce, it was not a feasible option as he simply lacked the resources to pay for a second bride (Rosen 1984:89). A man is thus wise to either maneuver his actions so that divorce does not occur or, threatened by his wife's riches, he will attend to the accumulation of his own material stock.

The husband-wife relationship is enhanced by emotional stability, or is broken by a lack of it. "When there is entente between husband and wife," explains one woman, "all obstacles can be overcome. Big crises become easy to deal with. When there is no entente, everything becomes a crisis" (Mernissi 1975:59). Troubles can be greatly exacerbated by the wife's spreading of harmful gossip that may damage her spouse's social standing, or by the ritual display of hatred towards him, such as silent refusal to share household space with him, or public verbal accusation and abuse (Ibid.:61). Rosen witnessed one such confrontation that was staged so all the neighbors could see:

> With the neighbors assembled around, the disputants stood at right angles to one another and continued their shouting...the women of the assembled families unhesitatingly averring that they were there all day long and never saw a man come visiting the wife. The women also showed no hesitation in telling the husband that he should spend more time at home and less in the cafes. After much shouting and gesturing it became clear that the husband was losing (1984:128).

The particular dispute in this case is also typical of the kind of conflicts that begin to wear down a marital relationship.

A wife, after bearing, raising, and marrying off her children may now see her marriage as more an unnecessary impediment than a fruitful and positive affinity (Maher 1974:204). Men, on the other hand, can grow sexually bored, or just generally tired of the marriage. Maria, another resident of Meknes, says that her husband "keeps repeating that he will get a new wife. He threatens me every morning. I do not worry anymore...but it hurts me when he says that, and I feel like hurting him back" (Mernissi 1975:65). Over time men will edge further and further away from the household, spending more time socializing in cafes and in the streets, and pursuing extra-marital relationships (Maher 1974:205). A man's avoidance of his wife in his later years essentially completes the distancing process he has undergone since the experience of circumcision.

The vitality and complexity of women's roles and powers within the household is fascinating to behold. Women are distributors and retrievers of social information with which they can fortify or weaken the image of whom they so choose; they are the arrangers of marriage and the diplomats in securing worthy family alliances; they are the guards of material resources in the home; they are the practitioners of sorcery. Though female seclusion is upheld when men pass into the household sphere, men are not able nor perhaps even interested in upsetting the imbalance of power and influence.

In view of these female power stratagems within the domestic realm, we are forced to abandon 'formal' and 'informal' as

analytical terms. Though women instigate and conduct marriage negotiations in a seemingly informal manner, they are in fact following certain underlying rules and processual patterns. Mothers' inclination to be friend or foe to their sons and sons' wives is determined by nothing more than their emotional reaction to the interactions they observe around them. Yet, the rules of deference towards the mother are quite formal and fixed, never to be broken or indirectly challenged. There exist specific laws on divorce and repudiation for men and women. But the rituals, often public gestures of hostility, and means of revenge at women's disposal seem to transcend any legal sanctions that men have. What is formal and informal? What is explicitly acknowledged and what is implicitly understood and followed? The very need to ask such questions points to the answer - the female world contains both formalities and informalities. I submit that the domestic realm, once reached and thoroughly examined, unfurls rules that are explicit, overt, and indeed public in their application to women as well as men.

CONCLUSION

What is the meaning of female seclusion in urban Moroccan society? Seeing this practice function on the ground level of daily life realities, how do we relate it to the sexual ideology which it perpetuates and by which it is legitimized? Religious doctrine proclaims that purdah is the societal check on women's dangerous sexual powers, that it sustains order against the looming threat of fitna - temptation, chaos, and calamity. The Moroccan myth, in its male version, uses seclusion to virtually cover women who are not only dangerous, but by extension, inferior to men. The female version, to the contrary, says women need to be secluded for protection, which implies that it is not women, but men who are a hazard to society. I interpret veiling and the seclusion of women in the following way: I begin with the fact that through purdah, women bear the ultimate responsibility for alleviating tension and conflict between the sexes, not only in Morocco, but in many Muslim societies (Sharma 1979). And Moroccan women make a truthful claim when they speak of the advantages that purdah affords them, which are not merely luxuries, but necessities for their existence. I would suggest, however, that seclusion of women is imperative to the lives of Moroccan men; herein lies the deeper meaning of this cultural tradition.

Sexual segregation essentially facilitates men in their

quest to attain Moroccan manhood - to occasionally awaken and satisfy their carnal desires, and then to lay them at rest, all by the will of their supreme rational faculties. Females are seen as objects (all be it inferior) of beauty and therefore detract males in their struggle, for let it be recalled that men are born sexually active beings, and are further encouraged to cultivate rather than suppress this instinct. Asked by Crapanzano why men like to take women by force, Tuhami answered:

> Because they have alot of semen. Such a man cannot talk to a woman. He must have her... You say that a man has alot of semen and runs with his penis in his hands. He is like a burro. It is the same with a boy of fifteen (1980:107).

In light of the public expectations of mature masculinity, Tuhami's explanation pinpoints the crucial problem with which men must contend throughout their lives; they are expected to curb their sexuality, but are taught to indulge in it. Thus, by leading an existence behind the neighborhood walls, beneath veil and djellaba, women facilitate men's endeavor to control their sexuality and become the proper social person that society demands them to be. Female seclusion allows men to escape women, to seek redemption in the public realm. Purdah is, in effect, a kind of instituted technique of avoidance for men. From boyhood to manhood they protract the physical and social distance between themselves and the domestic sphere so that they are far away from women's power and strength, so that they are free to build their own power, status, and social networks. In short, purdah actuates the slow, steady exclusion of men from domesticity until

they themselves are immersed, indeed secluded in the public world.

Does the method of seclusion work? Are men spared from the threat of women? I shall take the risk in suggesting that while segregation does forward the struggle of men, their effort to avoid women, and hence the weaknesses in themselves, will always be futile. First, where does this tendency towards avoidance and evasion come from? It seems to be firmly rooted in Moroccan society as a whole. The concept of fitna is repeatedly discussed in the anthropological literature on Morocco. The threat of disorder is a fact of Moroccan social life. In Moroccan relationships confrontation and open direct challenge is carefully avoided. Dwyer writes that "Conflicts, according to many informants, are believed to be revelatory events. They reveal feelings which, because they are often negative would be more normally hidden" (1976:683). An owner of a public oven explained it this way:

> If you want me to go to the other side of town I will agree when you ask me, but will then go and sit in the house...The next day you will ask me why I didn't go. I will tell you that my brother came, my legs hurt, or some other such thing...you will understand that I had some reason for not going. I want you to be well-disposed to me and was embarrassed to say 'no' to your face. I say 'yes' to avoid friction and thus your 'reason' is not broken (Rosen 1984:136).

Hence, in the face of tension and possible social eruption, the Moroccan survival mechanism is to avoid, to cover up, to seclude any source of fitna. For men, the danger is the opposite sex, alas, the institution of purdah. I believe, however, that one

avoids that which one knows to exist; therefore, the attempt to hide, conceal, stifle, shut out, is self-defeating. In other words, the greater the distance men put between themselves in the mosque or market, and women in the home, the more they see and feel the power and integrity of the female world.

My own impression of a sexist society or system is one that discriminates in favor of one sex and against the other. With this assumption, I shall try to address the issue of sexism in Moroccan purdah. In no society, do people, qualitatively or quantitatively, receive the same benefits or suffer the same hardships. Morocco is no exception to this rule. In the particular area of gender power and potential, it is quite difficult to ascertain which sex is at the greater disadvantage.

Let us first look at the question of life potential for males and females. (Remember that I am referring to middle class urban society.) In the eyes of Moroccan men and women, it is men who face higher parental and societal expectations. Their range of opportunites in the public world is extensive; their chance to climb the economic ladder is greater than that of a women. Women, though they are gaining more and more access into the public educational and economic system, are nonetheless not expected to move up and out of the confines of domestic life. Education for a woman most likely means that "She will know how to keep a 'modern home,' how to knit and sew and pay attention to vitamins, how to count money, write letters, tell the time, and deal with medical prescriptions" (Maher 1974:83). Is the system

sexist against women? Insofar as they are aware of opportunities in the public world and professions that they may find satisfying and meaningful, but are blocked by men and women from pursuing them, women are victims of sexism.

As pointed out in sections II and III, it is this set of higher expectations which effectively works against Moroccan males. Women are considerably prepared and socialized from birth for their life roles; men are not. Males are perceived at birth to be innately sexual, but they are not conditioned to control this proclivity. Rather, their sexuality is enhanced early on and, no doubt, flourishes in adulthood, just when they are expected to behave in accordance with the myth of male rationality and religious piety. I therefore wonder if it is men who, trapped between their own socialization and the sexual ideology, suffer most psychologically from the system of purdah.

Moroccan purdah creates two separate life spaces and systems, one male, one female. Having recognized the complexities of both, it is important to define male and female power in a dynamic, flexible framework. The binary construct of domestic/political--formal/informal does not work. Because Western anthropologists come from a society in which male and female are placed on opposite ends of the spectrum each with its own string of symbolic associations (male-public, dominant, political, religion, culture/women-private, subordinate, domestic, sexuality, nature), they have created the same features for male and female realms in purdah societies. In their efforts to

evaluate the distribution of power, they are compelled to locate where 'most' of it lies, not recognizing that it is a much more fluid phenomenon. I offer an approach that views Moroccan society as composed not of dominant and subordinate spheres, nor separate but equal spheres, but rather, of two basic domains in which there exist several constellations or situations of power and influence.

Moroccans see themselves as moving through various contexts throughout life:

> People do not, in the Moroccan view, change from within anymore than they can create a view of the moral order from within. Rather, people change their contexts, their environment, their situated networks of obligation (Rosen 1984:175).

Rosen emphasizes the movement through space which reveals human characteristics and determines their position of power in relation to the other actor(s) in each particular space. But what of the Moroccan developmental dynamic? How do we assess Dwyer's analysis of growth, change, and the temporality of sexual power? I submit that the Moroccan social universe has within it a spatial as well as a temporal dimension, which both act upon relations of power. That the nature of male and female activities and concerns change with and are determined by age is a valid claim and, needless to say, is well documented in the work of Dwyer and Mernissi. Though wifehood itself is a mark of higher status, it is only with age and experience that a woman moves into her role(s) with full force. Though a father is seen as assuming a strong, authoritarian posture, he is actually quite meek in the presence of his mother for several years. However, a

wife or mother does not remain completely secluded in domesticity, nor does a husband or father remain totally enveloped in public life. They all move back and forth, being submissive in one space, dominant in the other. And within each space, they relinquish and regain power as they encounter different persons with varying statuses. It is ultimately every "interactive situation" (Nelson 1974:558) which comes to express and define one's power and one's subservience. Power, after all, is not merely a 'resource' but a relationship between individuals.

***

The situation one finds in the sexually-segregated society of Morocco leaves the advocates of the theory of universal male dominance much to consider. With all the gross assumptions of cross-cultural female subordination, purdah societies have been extremely miscalculated and misrepresented. They are, therefore, perhaps the best ground on which to begin recognizing the structures and systems of woman's world, and the new theoretical and methodological approaches that they demand.

Beginning with the notions that male, female, and all life domains operate under formal and informal conditions; that domesticity is as political as the public is personal; that private realities are as important, if not more so, than public ideologies; that power is a dynamic social relationship, anthropologists can and must continue with more sophisticated,

conscientious inquiries into sex roles, power and society. More importantly, anthropologists need to examine men and women in relation to one another. The study of gender, emerging with the growth of the Feminist Movement, became exclusively wound up with looking at female populations. It is imperative, having made this significant advancement in the social sciences, that cross-cultural observations of men be taken in a new light. It is hopefully understood by now that they themselves are not society, but, like women, are an important half of society. Let us now look at how each sex is relative to the other, similar to and different from the other, dominant over and subordinate to the other. Only with such an approach can there further develop not a biased anthropology of men, or of women, but a sophisticated anthropology of gender.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Fitna translates into chaos and general disorder, and also connotes a beautiful woman.

[2] Boys remain under their mothers' wing until they are circumcised which generally occurs between the ages of two and eight (Dwyer 1978b).

[3] Dowry refers to the amount of goods and furnishings a bride brings into her new household. The public parade is a mark of family honor and status.

[4] On a general level, all Sefroui Moroccans can be said to share nisba in a regional sense. But when one begins to speak of village, town quarter, or family, more lines have to be drawn between men.

[5] See Fernea (1980:170-173) for an example of women bargaining in the market.

[6] In these orders, elder women pray to ancestors, and predict the following year's weather by the ritual removal of a pile of sacred rocks.

[7] A woman (or girl) will be vulnerable in her first years of marriage as she is in a new household.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ardener, Edwin.

1972 Belief and the Problem of Women. In The Interpretation of Ritual. J.S. Lafontaine, ed. pp.135-156. London: Travistock Publications Limited.

Ardener, Shirley.

1975 Introduction. In Perceiving Women. Shirley Ardener, ed. pp.9-48. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab.

1985 Sexuality in Islam. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bourdieu, P.

1971 The Berber House. In Rules and Meanings. Mary Douglas, ed. pp.98-110. Baltimore: Penguine Education.

Calverley, E.E.

1943 Doctrines of the Soul in Islam. The Moslem World 33:254-264.

Chodorow, Nancy.

1974 Family Structure and Feminine Personality. In Women, Culture and Society. Lamphere, Louise, and Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, eds. pp.43-66. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Crapanzano, Vincent.

1972 The Hamadsha. In Scolars, Saints and Sufis. Nikkie Keddie, ed. pp.327-348. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1980 Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Delaney, Carol.

Mortal Flow: Menstruation in Muslim Turkish Village Society. In Blood Magic=Explorations in the Anthropology of Menstruation. Buckley, Thomas, and Alma Gottlieb, eds. Forthcoming.

Dwyer, Daisey Hilse.

1979 Law Actual and Perceived: The Sexual Politics of Law in Morocco. Law and Society Review 13:739-756.

1978a Ideologies of Sexual Inequality and Strategies for Change in Male-Female Relations. American Ethnologist 5:227-241.

1978b Images and Self-Images. New York: Columbia University Press.

1978c Women, Sufism and Decision-making. In Women in the Muslim World. Beck, Lois and Nikkie Keddie, eds. pp.585-598. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

1976 Cultural Conceptions of Conflict and Variability in Conflict Boundaries - A Moroccan Example. Journal of Conflict Resolution 20:663-686.

Dwyer, Kevin.

1982 Moroccan Dialogues. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Eickelman, Dale F.

1976 Moroccan Islam. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock.

1984 The Charm: A Short Story. In Women and Family of the Middle East. Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, ed. pp.49-55. Austin: University of Austin Press.

1980 A Street in Marrakech. New York: Anchor Books.

Friedl, Ernestine.

1967 The Position of Women: Appearance and Reality. Anthropological Quarterly 40:97-108.

Geertz, Clifford.

1979 Suq: The Bazaar Economy in Sefrou. In Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society. Geertz, Clifford, Hildred Geertz, and Lawrence Rosen, eds. pp.123-314. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gottlieb, Alma.

1986 Dog: Ally or Traitor? Mythology, Cosmology and Society Among the Beng of Ivory Coast. to appear in: American Ethnologist 13(3). In press.

1982 Sex, Fertility and Menstruation Among the Beng of Ivory Coast: A Symbolic Analysis. Africa 52(4):34-47.

Hall, Edward T.

1969 The Hidden Dimension. New York: Anchor Books.

Lamphere, Louise.

1974 Strategies, Cooperation and Conflict Among Women in Domestic Groups. In Woman, Culture and Society. pp.97-112.

Maher, Vanessa.

1974 Women and Property in Morocco. London: Cambridge University Press.

Meigs, Anna S.

1976 Male Pregnancy and the Reduction of Sexual Opposition in a New Guinea Highlands Society. Ethnology 15:393-407.

Mernissi, Fatima.

1975 Beyond the Veil. Massachusetts: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc.

Morris, Constance Lily.

1970 Behind Moroccan Walls. New York: Books for Library Press.

Nelson, Cynthia.

1974 Public and Private Politics: Women in the Middle Eastern World. American Ethnologist 1:551-565.

Ortner, Sherry B.

1974 Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture? In Woman, Culture and Society. pp.67-87.

Paul, Lois.

1974 The Mastery of Work and the Mystery of Sex in a Guatemalan Village. In Woman, Culture and Society. pp.281-299.

Rogers, Susan Carol.

1978 A Woman's Place. Comparative Studies in Society and History 20:123-161.

1975 Female Forms of Power and the Myth of Male Dominance: a Model of Female/Male Interaction in Peasant Society. American Ethnologist 2:739-755.

Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist.

1974a Introduction. In Woman, Culture and Society. pp.1-15.

1974b Woman, Culture and Society: A Theoretical Overview. In Woman, Culture and Society. pp.17-42.